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P A R T N E R S

January 11, 2010

## **MEETING NOTES**

### **STAKEHOLDER MEETING WITH MARBLE VALLEY HISTORICAL SOCIETY PICKENS COUNTY, GEORGIA GS&P Project No. 26340.09**

MEETING DATE: December 14, 2009

PARTICIPANTS: Scott Shelton — Gresham, Smith and Partners (GS&P)  
Kent Black – Gresham, Smith and Partners (GS&P)  
Jody Braswell – Gresham, Smith and Partners (GS&P)  
Mimi Jo Butler – Marble Valley Historical Society (MVHS)  
Bob Perdue – Marble Valley Historical Society (MVHS)  
Gloria Beaudet – Marble Valley Historical Society (MVHS)  
Linda Geiger – Marble Valley Historical Society (MVHS)  
Tammy Bell – Marble Valley Historical Society (MVHS)  
James Hefner – Marble Valley Historical Society (MVHS)  
Lisa Crawford – Edwards-Pitman (EP)

DISCUSSION: SR 136 SAFETY PROJECT

1. GS&P began the meeting by highlighting GDOT's primary purpose for all roadways in the state is to provide safety and accessibility for the traveling public. GS&P briefly described the history of the project per the attached agenda.
2. GS&P highlighted the various locations of the crashes along the SR 136 corridor as shown on the aerial map, and GS&P noted that there has been one fatality per year for the last eight years for this corridor. Therefore, GDOT identified SR 136 as a safety project.
3. GS&P stated that a majority of the accidents were not a collision with another motor vehicle. Such accidents are often attributed to potential roadway alignment issues (i.e. horizontal and vertical design issues). In addition, this section of SR 136 has 2.5 times more accidents than other sections of SR 136, and this section of SR 136 has 7 times more accidents than similar types of roadways throughout the state.
4. GS&P was tasked by GDOT to evaluate SR 136 to determine what changes might be made to the horizontal and vertical design to help reduce the number of

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- crashes on SR 136, and GS&P noted that the roadway will not be widened to four lanes as part of this project.
5. Linda Greiger and James Hefner did not believe the road to be hazardous. However, Gloria Beaudet noted some areas that were hazardous.
  6. MVHS noted that high speeds on SR 136 lead to accidents on the sharp curves. MVHS recommended enforcement and signage to help slow speeders down along SR 136. GS&P noted that signing and striping could be completed to address safety concerns. However, GS&P stated these measures on their own probably will not address the safety concerns along the roadway.
  7. MVHS suggested widening the shoulders at the two sharp horizontal curves on SR 136 to help reduce accidents.
  8. GS&P noted that the proposed project would include upgrading the shoulder to 10' wide with 6'6" paved and 3'6" grass, and the 6'6" paved section would be adequate to accommodate bicycles per the North Georgia Regional Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan.
  9. MVHS inquired if alcohol was a contributing factor to the accidents. GS&P will investigate further to see if accidents were attributed to alcohol or roadway conditions.
  10. GS&P described that a Citizen Advisory Committee (CAC) would be formed from stakeholders along the corridor. The purpose of the CAC is to gather information about the corridor and to build consensus for an alternative that improves the safety of SR 136 and preserves cultural and historical resources. The CAC will meet 2-3 times and the first meeting will be held in February 2010.
  11. GS&P highlighted previous misunderstandings including the DRI which gave the perception the GDOT project would widen the roadway. GS&P reminded MVHS the proposed project is for safety issues, not capacity. It was MVHS understanding that the business that applied for the DRI are now in foreclosure.
  12. GS&P noted that historical and cultural resources exist along the SR 136 corridor. To determine potential historical resources, Edwards-Pitman will start with the tax assessor's office. Edwards-Pitman noted the various locations tentatively identified as potential historic resources on the aerial map.
  13. GS&P inquired from MVHS on the location of any known resources along SR 136, and requested any maps or other data be sent to EP.



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14. MVHS has old maps showing Cherokee structures and MVHS noted that Mrs. Duckett was knowledgeable about the area. MVHS will coordinate with EP to get them the information.
15. In February 2009, the Federal government identified parts of the Trail of Tears in northwest Georgia, north Alabama and North Carolina as part of the National Registry (WAMP Bill). MVHS stated they will look at more segments of the Old Federal Road/Trail of Tears to be added to the registry in Georgia.
16. MVHS believes the National Park is considering a park for the Trail of Tears possibly along SR 136. Eric Marz or Mahr is the representative for the National Parks and MVHS discussed this 4 years ago with him.
17. MVHS stated that parts of Old Federal Road are located on private property and you can see sections of the Old Federal Road bed as you drive along SR 136.
18. MVHS believes that many of the houses and pasture around the Blaine Masonic lodge are potential resources. MVHS has requested a state archaeologist meet on site near the Blaine Masonic Lodge and to date has not met on site.
19. MVHS recommended Section 2 of previous study as a good resource to start with. Edwards-Pitman will verify if they have Section 2 of the previous study and contact MVHS if not.
20. MVHS noted the property owner of the cemetery would like to rezone property for redevelopment, but the property owner is concerned the significance of the cemetery might prevent redevelopment. MVHS noted Marie Hyde is the daughter of Bonnie Hyde, the cemetery and property owner.
21. MVHS stated that many of the artifacts go back to Woodland, MS and are older than the Cherokee Indians.
22. MVHS stated that Saunders Village Town was the former name of the village along SR 136.
23. MVHS noted that the Carmel Historical sign points in the wrong direction and requests GS&P work coordinate with GDOT to correct. MVHS submitted a picture of the sign and GS&P forwarded to GDOT on 12/16/09.
24. MVHS stated that any dirt moved along SR 136 would probably be an archeological site since it is part of the Old Federal Road.



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25. GS&P's goal is to balance safety improvements to the roadway while preserving the cultural and historical resources.
26. MVHS agrees safety is important for SR 136 corridor. MVHS desire is to maintain the integrity of Federal Road wherever possible. If the Federal Road has to be impacted, MVHS would request research and documentation be completed to capture and memorialize the Federal Road/Trail of Tears route.
27. GS&P shared how a CAC would be formed for the safety project on SR 136 for stakeholders along the corridor. The purpose of the CAC would be to gain information about the corridor and to develop consensus for a preferred alternative that improves the safety of SR 136 while preserving the natural and historical resources.
28. MVHS stated there was a farm close to SR 515 and suggested GS&P might want to include the landowner on the CAC. His property comes up to SR 136 project on the outside of the curve.
29. MVHS suggested some other potential contacts to be included as Dr. Robert Keller with the Mountain Conservation Trust and Don Wells with Mountain Stewards. MVHS will check with Don. MVHS recommended checking their respective websites for additional information.
30. GS&P will follow up with MVHS to determine who their two representatives will be for the CAC in January 2010.

This represents our understanding of the items discussed at this meeting. If you have any questions or comments concerning any of the information contained herein, please contact me.

Prepared by: Scott Shelton, P. E.  
Project Engineer